

V

BOOK REVIEWS

GARDINER'S HANDBOOK OF SKIN DISEASES. Fourth Edition, revised.
By John Kinnear, M.D., M.R.C.P. 239 pages ; 16 Colour Plates ;
70 Illustrations. E. & S. Livingston, 1939. Price, 10s. 6d.

THIS handbook sets out to describe briefly the more common diseases of the skin and succeeds in presenting a satisfactory introduction to the subject. In a work of this size, more than a passing reference to some of the more rare conditions could not be expected, but the book should appeal to those who, as the author so aptly states, "Think they know nothing of the subject."

Regarding the book as introductory to the subject, the writer has wisely described the various conditions in a rather dogmatic manner ; more detailed knowledge and appreciation of the many conflicting opinions can be obtained from the larger books. Many of Dr. Gardiner's original views have been replaced by opinions held by Dr. Kinnear, so that the book may fairly be considered to conform with recent advances that have taken place in the subject. In a work of this size, rather too much space is occasionally given to impressions the author has formed from results of some special treatment on one or two cases. A passing reference to these, with emphasis on the more established methods of treatment, would have been more in keeping with the dogmatic tendency of the book.

An excellent Introduction describes the structure, function and lesions of the skin, and explains the principles of action of the chief remedial agents. Throughout the book simple sketches reveal the pathology of the lesions and should do much to remove the imaginary obscurity of Dermatology. Further, the tendency to regard a skin rash as an isolated phenomenon will no longer delude those who appreciate Dr. Kinnear's assumption that most lesions are manifestations of internal derangements.

Most dermatologists will consider four doses of whole blood to be inadequate for desensitisation ; adrenaline by mouth to be inactive ; and arsenical dermatitis to occur late as well as early in treatment. On the whole, however, the book avoids controversial points very cleverly, and from this point of view, if from no other, it is a very good introduction to the subject and would be a valuable addition to the student or practitioner's library.

D. E.

SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE CLINIC FOR VENEREAL DISEASES. By
Dorothy Manchée. Baillière, Tindall & Cox, London, 1938.
96 pages. Price, 3s.

MISS MANCHÉE'S experience as Lady Almoner to the clinic for venereal diseases at St. Mary's Hospital, London, has enabled her to produce an extremely useful book which will be not only of the greatest

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help to those who wish to take up such work, but will do much to enlighten and convince those who do not consider an almoner necessary in a V.D. clinic.

The author stresses the necessity for active personal interest in the individual, an attitude which is well exemplified in the statement, "The first interview is of the greatest value, since if the right contact is established the patient will feel that she has a friend to whom she may turn." "Constructive listening is very helpful to people who have no one to whom they dare confide their anxiety."

Anyone who has worked in such a clinic realises that here is the basis for all work among these patients; for their attitude is very different from that of the patients met with in other hospital departments. They are frequently either ashamed or indignant on first attendance, and it is only by approaching each one as an individual and attempting to help in the special problem that she will be persuaded to undergo the lengthy treatment that is so frequently required.

Miss Manchée shows how necessary is an atmosphere of friendliness in the clinic and why the patient must be made to feel that the medical, nursing and almoning staffs are all working for her benefit.

That the success of follow-up methods, letters or visits, depends upon tactful observance of detail is very true. No patient who has been worried by fear of exposure to relatives or neighbours by a tactless visitor, or insufficiently addressed letters, is likely to resume treatment.

The problem of the pregnant woman infected with a venereal disease is one that calls for the greatest consideration and co-operation, particularly in the case of the unmarried girl. To persuade her to realise the imperative necessity of regular treatment is sometimes very difficult. Should the infected pregnant girl marry the man responsible for her condition? This problem, one of the most difficult encountered in V.D. clinics, as well as many others affecting such patients, are admirably dealt with in the chapter devoted to the maternity patient.

For little girls suffering from gonorrhoea in-patient accommodation is considered preferable, particularly when the teaching of school subjects can be continued. Full reference is given to the accommodation suitable and available for the infected child in hospitals and special homes.

The chapter on the statistical work of an almoner is most clear and thorough, and although the requirements at the end of the year appear most formidable, the author indicates various methods of simplifying the work.

The recommendation by the author that the diagnosis be entered against the name of the patient in the principal register, however confidential it may be regarded, is likely to be dangerous and is contrary to the principles laid down in the Statutory V.D. Regulations of the Local Government Board in 1916.

No better description of the work of an almoner can be given than the statement that "one acts as confidant, general information bureau, employment exchange and port of call in time of trouble."

The introductory chapter by Dr. G. L. M. McElligott provides an excellent summary of the medical aspects of venereal diseases which will be helpful to all almoners.

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This small volume, which should be read by every almoner, will be of interest also to the medical officers and nursing staff of every V.D. clinic.

A. E. M.

WHITLA'S DICTIONARY OF TREATMENT. Eighth edition. By. R. S. Allison, M.D., M.R.C.P., and C. A. Calvert, M.B., B.Ch., F.R.C.S.I. London. Baillière, Tindall & Cox. 1,285 pages. Price, 30s.

THIS is the eighth edition of a book which must have occupied a prominent place on the shelves of many practitioners. It has been brought very much up to date by its new editors, Dr. R. S. Allison and Mr. C. A. Calvert, who have had the assistance of a number of members of the Belfast School.

How does one review a dictionary? One may criticise the arrangement or the type, or one may look for the newer forms of treatment and make pertinent remarks about their non-inclusion. Yet one must be careful lest one regrets the omission of to-day's Elixir which becomes to-morrow's Curiosity.

So, with some trepidation, the reviewer turns the pages, and he notes that in quinsy there is no mention of Prontosil or Rubiazol, and in the case of "pulled elbow" he is referred to the section dealing with Sprains and Strains where "pulled elbow" is not mentioned.

In the feeding of infants an excellent opening is marred by the statement that the development of sore nipples renders breast-feeding impossible. Advice to the expectant and nursing mother is human; it has been said previously that a glass of stout is good even for a man who may be nursing nothing more than a grievance.

Artificial feeding is dealt with in a most helpful manner, though at first sight it is a little misleading to read that the infant requires "from $1\frac{3}{4}$ to 2 oz. of cows' milk per pound body weight per day with the addition of 1 oz. of sugar." This is made clearer in the example given.

In the advice concerning Supplementary Feeding, it is suggested that a supplemented feed should consist of 1 oz. of cows' milk with 1 oz. of water, or of two measures of dried milk made up to 2 oz. with water. The latter is twice the strength of the former.

But against these cavilling remarks must be balanced the value of many pages of helpful advice which will be of service to the practitioner, and the Dictionary may be safely recommended to the busy man who so often has need of a quick reference book. He will not be misled and will often find much help in these pages.

N. L. L.